

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) ~~The use of articles~~
An article formed of from a water-absorbent open-celled crosslinked acid-functional addition polymer foams foam and containing finely divided silicon dioxide and/or, at least one surfactant, or both on their a surface as an of the article for acquisition and/or distribution layer, in hygiene articles.

2. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in~~
The article of claim 1, wherein said surface of said formed articles article has been subjected to a post-crosslinking operation by application of at least one crosslinker and heating to temperatures a temperature at which said crosslinker reacts with said polymers polymer.

3. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in~~
The article of claim 1 or 2, wherein said formed articles are sheets, webs, films, strands or granules article is a sheet, web, film, strand, or granule.

4. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in~~
any The article of claims claim 1 to 3, wherein said finely divided silicone dioxide has an average particle size of from 5 to 50 μm and a BET surface area of at least 100 m^2/g .

5. (Currently amended) A ~~use as claimed in~~
any The article of claims claim 1 to 4, wherein the
amount of silicon dioxide and/or surfactant on said
surface of said formed ~~articles~~ article is in the range
from 0.01 to 5% by weight, based on the weight of the
hydrogel foam.

6. (Currently amended) A ~~use as claimed in~~
any The article of claims claim 1 to 5, wherein said
formed ~~articles are webs or films~~ article is a web or
film from 0.5 to 10 mm in thickness.

7. (Currently amended) A ~~use as claimed in~~
The article of claim 6, wherein, in the ~~hygiene arti-~~
cle, only ~~the a~~ bodyfacing side of said ~~webs or films~~
web or film has been surface postcrosslinked and
treated with the silicon dioxide and/or a the surfa-
tant.

8. (Currently amended) A ~~use as claimed in~~
any The article of claims claim 1 to 7, wherein the
predominantly open-celled hydrogel foams comprise foam
comprises a crosslinked polymers polymer of acrylic
acid.

9. (Currently amended) A ~~use as claimed in~~
any The article of claims 1 to 8, claim 10 wherein said
hygiene ~~articles are~~ article is selected from the group
consisting of infant diapers, incontinence products,
femcare articles, wound contact materials, ~~or~~ and
secondary wound dressings.

10. (New) The article of claim 1 wherein
the article is an acquisition layer or a distribution
layer in a hygiene article.